

Message Text

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12

ACTION SS-25

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, KS

SUBJECT: F-5ES FOR KOREA

1. THE FOLLOWING THREE DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING F-5E
AIRCRAFT HAVE CROPPED UP IN PAST WEEK OR SO.

A. JUSMAG HAS BEEN ADVISED ORALLY BY
ASSISTANT SECRETARY MND FOR LOGISTICS PAK SEOK-CHO
THAT FINAL DECISION HAS BEEN MADE BY PRESIDENT PAK
TO SEEK PURCHASE RATHER THAN CO-PRODUCTION OF 54
F-5ES AND SIX F-5FS. ROKS EXPECT TO SUBMIT REQUEST
FOR LETTER OF OFFER SHORTLY, (WHICH WILL BE TRANSMITTED
VIA JUSMAG CHANNEL), AND WILL ASK FOR SUFFICIENT FMS
CREDIT TO COVER COST OF USG FURNISHED EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES
INVOLVED; CASH AND COMMERCIAL CREDITS
WILL BE USED TO PAY REMAINING COSTS. ROKS ARE
REQUESTING THAT FIRST THIRTY AIRCRAFT BE
DELIVERED BY NORTHROP DURING CALENDAR YEAR 1977.

B. ROK AIR FORCE CHIEF OF STAFF CHU YONG-
BOCK HAS WRITTEN TO DEPUTY COMMANDER UNC STATING HIS
UNDERSTANDING THAT 21 F-5E AIRCRAFT RECENTLY FLOWN
OUT OF SOUTH VIETNAM MAY ALSO BE AVAILABLE. GENERAL
CHU ASKS IF THESE AIRCRAFT CAN BE MADE AVAILABLE
TO ROKAF AS ADD-ON TO 72 MAP F-5ES. PRESUMABLY THEY
WOULD ALSO REDUCE REQUIREMENT FOR 60 ADD-ON AIRCRAFT
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BUT CHU IS NOT SPECIFIC ABOUT THIS. NOR DOES CHU
MENTION IN HIS LETTER AMOUNT OF PAYMENT OR
CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH ROKG MIGHT BE PREPARED
TO ACCEPT THESE AIRCRAFT.

C. WE ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT THERE IS
SUBSTANTIAL POSSIBILITY THAT ROK IS LIKELY TO END UP
BEING OFFERED 21 "USED" F-5ES WHICH WERE DIVERTED
TO TAIWAN IN PLACE OF NEW BIRDS ROKS EXPECT. WE
UNDERSTAND FROM JUSMAG PHONE CONVERSATIONS WITH
DOD THAT IMMEDIATE RESULT OF ABOVE DECISION WILL
BE THAT NO F-5E DELIVERIES WILL BE MADE AFTER
JULY 1975 UNTIL AT LEAST FEBRUARY 76, IF THE "USED"
ROC AIRCRAFT ARE NOT ACCEPTED BY KOREA.

2. I WOULD APPRECIATE EVALUATION OF POSSIBILITY
THAT WE HAVE TO FOIST OFF USED F-5ES FROM TAIWAN
ON ROKS AND FACTORS INVOLVED. FOR REASONS GIVEN
IN PREVIOUS MESSAGES ON THIS SUBJECT I BELIEVE THIS
WOULD BE MISTAKE AND WOULD CAUSE US SUBSTANTIAL
DIFFICULTIES HERE WHICH SHOULD BE
WEIGHED CAREFULLY AGAINST BENEFITS OF ALTERNATE
USE TO WHICH NEXT 21 "NEW" PRODUCTION F-5ES WILL
BE PUT. IT WOULD WORSEN A BAD SITUATION IF AS JUSMAG
NOW TELLS ME F-5ES FROM ROC WILL ARRIVE AT LEAST TWO
MONTHS BEHIND CURRENT DELIVERY SCHEDULE, WHICH
INCIDENTALLY HAS BEEN GIVEN TO ROK. IN SHORT WE
SHOULD CONTINUE BELIEVE TO DO EVERYTHING WE CAN
TO FULFILL OUR PROMISE IN THIS CASE.

3. I REALIZE, HOWEVER, THAT DIFFICULTIES MAY PROVE
INSURMOUNTABLE. IF DELIVERY OF 21 NEW AIRCRAFT
PROVES IMPOSSIBLE RIGHT NOW AND JULY TO FEBRUARY HIATUS IN DELIVERY
DEVELOPS WE MUST SEEK ALTERNATIVE.
ONE SUCH ALTERNATIVE MIGHT BE TO OFFER KOREANS DELIVERY
OF 21 ROC AIRCRAFT AT FUNDED COST (\$1.6 MILLION),
WHICH WAS COST OF THE 21 AIRCRAFT DIVERTED TO ROC
AND WHICH WOULD COMPENSATE FOR "USED" CONDITION
OF AIRCRAFT. THESE 21 AIRCRAFT WOULD BE COUNTED
AGAINST 60 AIRCRAFT FOLLOW-ON PROGRAM AND WOULD
NOT BE IN LIEU OF THE 72 MPA FUNDED AIRCRAFT,
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REGULAR SCHEDULED DELIVERY OF WHICH WOULD BE
RESUMED AGAIN IN FEBRUARY 76.

4. ONE OTHER POSSIBILITY WOULD BE DELIVERY,
POSSIBLY ALSO DURING JULY/FEBRUARY PERIOD, OF 21
EX-SVN BIRDS WHICH ROKS HAVE NOW ASKED US FOR, IF
THEY ARE IN SUFFICIENTLY GOOD CONDITION TO BE
REFURBISHED. DEPENDING ON AMOUNT WE CHARGE, TOTAL
OF 42 F-5ES WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY CAUSE INDIGESTION
PROBLEMS AND FINANCING WOULD FRANKLY BE DIFFICULT
HURDLE. THESE ARE POSSIBILITIES HOWEVER, WHICH I
BELIEVE SHOULD BE EXPLORED.

5. AS WE HAVE UNDERLINED REPEATEDLY THIS IS JUST
NOT TIME POLITICALLY TO FALL SHORT IN SUCH A MAJOR
PROGRAM AS THIS. IF WE ABSOLUTELY CANNOT CONTINUE
DELIVERING NEW AIRCRAFT -- AND THIS CONTINUES TO BE
MY FIRST OPTION -- WE MUST FIND MORE REASONABLE
SOLUTION THAN SIMPLY OFFERING USED PLANES AS
SUBSTITUTE FOR NEW ONES.

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